

Today in Corps history:
Nov. 21, 1836: Marines and soldiers took action against the Seminole Indians at Wahoo Swamp, Fla.

Source: Marine Corps History

FAST FACT



Local: TSP opens , enables federal employees to enroll, see Page 3

Feature: Battle shines on drill field despite life's challenges, see Page 4

District News: District commander's son becomes one of the few, see Page 4

THE BOOT

"We Make Marines"

Inside



Steelers' cheerleaders win State competition

The Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina Laurel Bay Steelers 11- to 12-year-old girls cheerleading squad was named the Grand Champion of the state ...

For more, see Page 6

Volume 55 Number 45

Serving the Marines and Sailors of MCRD/ERR Parris Island, S.C.

November 21, 2003

Local News

SEMPER FIT AWARDS SFOs OF THE YEAR

Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina's Semper Fit Health Promotions held its Quarterly Officer Meeting Oct. 31. During the meeting, Director Crystal Dilliard named the Semper Fit Officers of the Year for the Depot and MCAS Beaufort. For the Depot, the award went to Master Sgt. Clarence Haywood, Operations Chief for H&SBn. Semper Fit Officers are responsible for ensuring that all Marines in their section receive Health Promotions training each year.

DEPOT MUSEUM OPEN AFTER THANKSGIVING

The Parris Island Museum will be open after Thanksgiving for normal working hours, but will be closed Thanksgiving Day. Call 228-2951 for more information.

USCB REGISTRATION GOING ON NOW

The University of South Carolina - Beaufort is now taking registration for the Spring semester. Classes are offered during the day and at night. Military tuition assistance pays 100 percent of an active-duty student's tuition. For class listings, visit www.sc.edu/beaufort or call the Depot Education Office at 228-2107.

GOOD NEIGHBOR BONUS MEANS \$400

Tri-Command Military Housing is offering a Good Neighbor Bonus to current residents who refer families to base housing. Every referral earns a current resident \$400 cash or \$200 cash plus a Beaufort Night Out. To find out more, call 379-3300.

On the Web

SAVANNAH RIVER BRIDGE RUN DEC. 6

The Savannah River Bridge Run touts itself as the South's toughest bridge run and invites racers to run, walk or crawl a five- or 10-kilometer path across the Savannah River bridge Dec. 6.

The race includes a military division as well as a costume division.

Visit their Web site at www.savannahriverbridgerun.com for all the details.

Out in Town

ARTS IN THE PARK BACK TO THE FUTURE

Arts in the Park Moonlight Cinema presents Back to the Future at Waterfront Park Saturday at 7 p.m. Admission and popcorn are free. Call 521-0611 to find out more.

SHELTER COVE HOSTS FESTIVAL OF TREES

The 18th Annual Festival of Trees and Lights begins Monday and runs through Nov. 30 at The Mall at Shelter Cove in Hilton Head. Activities include a gift boutique and decorated trees and gingerbread houses. Admission is free, but an unwrapped gift is appreciated. To find out more, visit www.hhprefestival.com.

Weather



Friday
Hi 69 Low 50
Saturday
Sunny
Hi 72 Low 51
Sunday
Sunny
Hi 79 Low 53

CPL. THOMAS PERRY

STAFF WRITER

President George W. Bush signed legislation that increased the death gratuity payment from \$6,000 to \$12,000, and ensured that it would be provided tax-free Nov. 11.

The legislation is just a portion of the Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003, said Army Lt. Col. Janet Fenton, the Armed Forces Tax Council director. The death gratuity payment portion is retroactive

to Sept. 10, 2001, in order to provide for service members who died in the terrorist attacks the following day and in the ongoing global war on terror.

"If you are killed on active duty, regardless of whether you're in theater, in a training accident or die from disease, your family receives \$12,000 death gratuity that is not taxed," said Fenton. "That's a big change. In addition, any future increases to the death gratuity will remain tax-free."

The increased death gratuity

"The Congress and Senate came together and realized that \$6,000 just wasn't enough. The price of a burial can be much higher."

- Randy Westerfield, the Depot's deputy disbursing officer



stems from years of debate about whether military families were properly compensated for a service member's death.

"The Congress and Senate came together and realized that \$6,000 just wasn't enough," said Randy Westerfield, the

Depot's deputy disbursing officer, who explained that the death gratuity is designed to cover a service member's burial expenses. "The price of a burial can be much higher."

According to Curt Copeland, owner of Copeland Funeral Home and Beaufort County coroner, the total price of a funeral can range anywhere from \$3,000 to \$13,000 depending on the family's needs and travel. The average funeral is about \$8,000.

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Congress increases death gratuity payment, cuts tax

Marines prepare to play important role in OIF-2, OEF-5

More than 20,000 Marines, sailors scheduled to support operations in Iraq, Afghanistan

DIVISION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS HQMC

The Marine Corps is preparing to send units to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2 and Operation Enduring Freedom 5 respectively.

The Corps' contribution of forces for OIF-2 will be approximately 21,000 Marines and sailors. Marines participating in OEF-5 will be one infantry battalion, which will bring the total number of Marine forces in Afghanistan to approximately 1,000.

The current plan is to send a division-sized Marine Air Ground Task Force to Iraq with the preponderance of units coming from the I Marine Expeditionary Force, headquartered at Camp Pendleton, Calif. These forces will primarily replace the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division.

Marine units, as always, will deploy with their full complement of combat capabilities. Marine forces will primarily deploy to Iraq in two seven-month rotations. The first rotation is expected to be from March - September. The second rotation is expected to be

from September 2004 to March 2005.

There will be approximately 21,000 Marines in each seven-month rotation. The reserve component of the first seven-month rotation will be approximately 1,500 Marines and the second rotation will be approximately 4,500.

In support of OEF-5 the Marine Corps will send an infantry battalion from the 2nd Marine Division to Afghanistan for a planned seven-month deployment.

The Marine Corps always has forces forward deployed and is currently supporting other commitments around the globe, such as the recurring Marine Expeditionary Unit deployments and the Unit Deployment Program in Okinawa and Iwakuni, Japan.

In light of those commitments, the Marine Corps is looking closely at how to strike an effective balance between those and the OIF-2 and OEF-5 missions. Marine Corps leadership feels this rotation cycle is best when considering operational readiness, unit morale and family separations. Most importantly, it will allow the Marine Corps to accomplish the mission in Iraq while sustaining other commitments in Afghanistan and around the globe.

The Marine Corps' role in Operation Iraqi Freedom-2 and Enduring Freedom-5 is another example of the Marine Corps' continuing importance to the conduct of national security missions, by providing combatant commanders the forces required to effectively prosecute the Global War on Terrorism.

Sailor on rappel ...



Cpl. Jennifer Brofer

Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Dieffenbach, lead Petty Officer of health records at the Branch Medical Clinic, prepares to rappel off the 48.5-foot rappel tower at Page Field Nov. 17, to celebrate his reenlistment for two more years in the Navy.

Shooters take aim at Rod and Gun Club's Turkey Shoot



Cpl. Jennifer Brofer

Navy Capt. Bill Butt, general dentist at MCAS Beaufort, helps his 10-year-old son David load his shotgun during the Rod and Gun Club's annual Turkey Shoot Saturday.

CPL. JENNIFER BROFER

STAFF WRITER

Aiming in downrange at a paper target 25 yards away, more than 500 service members, civilians and their families tested their shooting skills during the Rod and Gun Club's annual Turkey Shoot at the old skeet range Saturday.

At \$1 per shot, relays of 20 participants lined up in front of the targets using a 410-, 12-, 16- or 20-gauge shotgun in an attempt to shoot the paper turkey dead center for their chance to take home a real Thanksgiving turkey or ham of their own.

The Turkey Shoot, which started in 1941, is one of the club's most well-known annual events.

"We do it to give back to the community," said Darrell Hilton, chairman of the board of directors for the Rod and Gun Club. "There are a lot of young people that really love to come out and shoot. We have even had guys come up from North Augusta, [Ga.] just to participate."

Some may have come just to try

and win a turkey, but most participants came for the fun.

"It's about family tradition ... my family has been coming every year for six years," said Maj. Brian Bartholf, Air Combat Element operations officer for Marine Aircraft Group-31. "I love just coming out here and seeing people having a good time."

The shoot started at 7:30 a.m. and continued long after the sun went down, like it has in past years.

"Sometimes we have been out here so late, we had to shine a spotlight on the targets just to see," said Hilton.

Many shooters also brought their families to get a taste of the shooting experience.

"This is one of the few opportunities for families to enjoy shooting sports," said Navy Capt. Bill Butt, general dentist for MCAS Beaufort and father of two. "Last year we were very fortunate and won two turkeys. My boys had been looking forward to this for a long time."

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